

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

August 20, 2003

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

It was moved by Commissioner Maher, and seconded by Commissioner Niva to approve the minutes of the June 4 and July 16, 2003 Commission meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

INTRODUCTION OF COMMISSION ADMINISTRATOR

Chair Davis and Commissioners welcomed newly appointed Commission Administrator Jennifer Ziegler. Ms. Ziegler joins the Commission effective September 1, 2003.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT DISTRICT (RTID) DISCUSSION

Chair Davis provided an update of ongoing discussions with the Regional Transportation Investment District (RTID) regarding the appropriation and distribution of funds. He stated that the intent of the Legislature is clear that funds must remain separate functions and may not be merged. The Department and RTID are working together to retain a consultant. Chair Davis requested that the Commission move to authorize himself and Secretary MacDonald to act on behalf of the Commission and Department in further discussions with the RTID regarding this matter.

It was moved by Commissioner Maher and seconded by Commissioner Barnes to authorize Chair Davis representing the Commission and Secretary MacDonald representing the Department to work with the Regional Transportation Investment District (RTID) to make decisions and act accordingly. The motion was approved unanimously.

Commissioner Kargianis requested that the Commission be kept informed regarding the status of the Regional Transportation Investment District (RTID) tolling issues. Secretary MacDonald responded that the Department would provide a briefing at the September Commission meeting.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY REPORT

Secretary MacDonald introduced Ken Smith, Manager, WSDOT Value Engineering. Mr. Smith presented two awards to the Department from the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). The National Value Engineering Award was presented for Most Innovative Proposal During Process for the I-90 and Collector-Distributor System and US 395 North Spokane Corridor Value Engineering Study. Accepting the awards on behalf of the Department were Jerry Lenzi, Regional Administrator, Eastern Region and Mike Gribner, Project Engineer, Eastern Region. The second award was

presented for the Most Value Added During Engineering Award for SR 509/I-5 Corridor Completion Project. Accepting the award on behalf of the Department was Susan Everett, Engineering Manager, SR 509 Urban Project.

Secretary MacDonald briefed the Commission regarding Washington State Ferries (WSF) issues surrounding the new Request for Proposal (RFP). He explained that WSF is developing an RFP for a new master concessionaire on the ferries. This new proposal will offer a broader variety of services to the public than what is currently available. He moved on to discuss the Department's new Scenic Byway map emphasizing its importance to tourism in the State.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND PROJECT DELIVERY

Secretary MacDonald briefed the Commission regarding the results of the 2003 fiscal year construction program delivery. He unveiled the new reporting structure for the "nickel projects" funded through the 2003 Legislative Transportation Funding Package. The Department's strategy for reporting on the funding package will include a web page link to each project's quarterly report. He explained that the Gray Notebook would now include the "Beige Pages" that will include project delivery reporting, project information, highlights, cost and schedule information. The Beige Page will detail recent accomplishments including a "watch list" of projects that may be at risk of not meeting original cost or schedule goals – and what can be done about it. Secretary MacDonald explained that the watch list is a crucial part of the Department's commitment to accountability. Balancing program expenditures is an ongoing process due to the large number of projects and variety of work managed on a daily basis.

Kevin Dayton, WSDOT Construction Engineer, provided the Commission with an annual summary of the last 12 months of construction projects in relation to cost expectations. He outlined highway construction contracts, the amount awarded in comparison to engineer's estimate at the time of advertisement for work to be done by the contractor. In the projects completed, 65% of the total dollar volume closed out at or below 10% over the awarded value. This represents 137 out of 175 contracts. An analysis of these projects indicated that the most notable reasons for project overruns were increased traffic control, additional asphalt quantities, terms that could not be fully estimated and third party delays.

Paula Hammond, Chief of Staff, briefed the Commission regarding public transportation project grants that were awarded for the month of June 2003. She explained that grant funds will be distributed to transit agencies and many non-profit agencies that provide transportation in areas where there are no transit services. State funds will also be used to match federal funds for rural, specialized and job access programs. She moved on to discuss the Rail Capital Program and the Department's intent to maximize the expenditure of biennial appropriations by delivering projects that are ready to go. The Department tries to accommodate wherever possible the business need of the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway (BNSF) and other partners that impact timing and sequencing of the program as originally planned by the Legislature. Ms. Hammond reported to the Commission that the Department is moving forward with the purchase of the Talgo train set. Funds for the purchase will be moved forward to the 2003-05 biennium.

John Conrad, Assistant Secretary, Engineering and Regional Operations, briefed the Commission regarding project schedule expectations. This is a critical component of the undertaking that the Legislature has asked the Department to meet in the delivery of projects in the 2003 Transportation Funding Package. The Legislature has directed the Department to provide a project-by-project spending schedule. Although the Department expects few changes, the spending schedule will sometimes need adjustments as projects progress in design and construction. Mr. Conrad discussed program issues on 2003 Transportation Fund Projects that require further direction or guidance to determine and implement legislative intent. He went on to discuss the Project Management Information System, work zone safety, contractor worker safety and outsourcing to consultants.

Amy Arnis, Deputy Director, Strategic Planning and Programming, provided an update of the 2003 Transportation Funding Package that includes tracking finance expectations against program delivery results. Throughout the implementation of the new funding package, actual revenue receipts, revenue forecast and other financing assumptions must be continually monitored, updated; and related to actual and projected expenditures. This information will be included in future reports to the Commission. She briefly outlined the Bond Sales Plan indicating that debt service for gas tax bonds will be paid by the Nickel increase in the gas tax and debt service for state GO bonds will be paid by the 0.3 percent sales tax on vehicle sales.

PUBLIC AND LEGISLATOR COMMENT PERIOD

Don Williams, citizen, expressed his concerns regarding tolling and Tacoma Narrows Bridge construction.

GRAY NOTEBOOK PRESENTATION

Daniela Bremmer, Director, Strategic Assessment Office, updated the Commission regarding the status of the Summary Report on Transportation Benchmarks. She provided a brief background history of the benchmarks explaining that in November of 2000, the Governor appointed Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation's (BRCT) Benchmark Committee published its final report for Washington State. The report recommended eleven benchmarks for Washington's transportation system and a set of topics for additional benchmarks for future development. These benchmarks have been implemented and presented to the Legislative Transportation Committee. Keith Cotton, Information and Performance Analyst, briefed the Commission regarding meeting the policy goals of the benchmarks. Ms. Bremmer presented the Summary Report on the Implementation of Transportation Benchmarks codified in RCW 47.01.012 to the Commission for approval.

It was moved by Commissioner Niva and seconded by Commissioner Maher to adopt the Summary Report on the Implementation of Transportation Benchmarks codified in RCW 47.01.012. The motion was approved unanimously.

STATE OF OREGON – ROAD USER FEE TASK FORCE (RUFTE)

Jim Whitty, Staff Director, Oregon Road User Fee Task Force, briefed the Commission regarding the Oregon Road User Fee Task Force's analysis and recommendations. For the past two years, Oregon has engaged in a study of alternative funding sources for transportation to be carried out by the task force. The task force is tasked with the duty of designing a new revenue system for road funding to ultimately replace the gas tax. Oregon is currently pursuing a demonstration project for charging a per mile fee to eventually replace the gas tax as a prime source of transportation funding. Mr. Whitty described the results of the study, and how they are proceeding to implement the recommendations.

MODIFICATION OF HOV HOURS OF OPERATION

Charlie Howard, Director, Strategic Planning and Programming, provided an update regarding the early completion of the HOV-related Eastside Freeways Safety Improvements Project and the Department's observations on how the Eastside freeway HOV lanes are operating with nighttime opening. The Department and Washington State Patrol have not observed any adverse effect of the change in HOV lane hours of operation. The Department is currently collecting data to determine traffic patterns and will provide an update to the Commission quarterly.

HIGHWAYS OF STATEWIDE SIGNIFICANCE (HSS) UPDATE

Charlie Howard, Director, Strategic Planning & Programming, provided a process for updating the list of Highways of Statewide Significance (HSS). Based on the Commission's and Legislature's original adoption of the HSS list, the five-year update deadline is 2004. Since adoption of the HSS list, there have been a number of legislative actions and local jurisdiction interests regarding the system. The Regionalism bill modified the HSS designation process and the Legislative Transportation Committee (LTC) has included a review of the HSS in their work program for the fall of 2003. The LTC has not yet developed a detailed work program. The Department has received four amendment requests to the HSS list. In December 2003, the Commission will review nominations and recommendations and make a determination on the merits of the nominations. The Commission will submit proposed changes, (if any) to the Legislature in January of 2004.

It was moved by Commissioner Kargianis and seconded by Commissioner Marr to approve the update process for Highways of Statewide Significance. The motion was approved unanimously.

WSDOT SAFETY OVERSIGHT OF TACOMA LINK

Jeffrey Schultz, WSDOT Rail Operations and Technical Expert, briefed the Commission regarding Sound Transit's new Tacoma Link light rail line. To ensure a safe and orderly transition from testing to revenue service the Department is conducting a Pre-Passenger Safety and Security audit of Tacoma Link before revenue service begins. Transportation Resource Associates (TRA), a consulting firm that specializes in transit operations, is conducting the audit under contract with the Department. Furthermore,

Tacoma Link has submitted their system safety program plan to the Department for review and approval before revenue service begins. The most critical component is an on-site audit that TRA will perform. Once this last component is completed the system will be ready for startup.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Barnes reported that he attended the groundbreaking for I-5/SR500, and Senator Patty Murray's Transportation Challenges conference.

Commissioner Kargianis had nothing to report.

Commissioner Forner reported that she attended the Pacific Northwest Economic Region Conference. She reported attending the Methow River Bridge ribbon cutting ceremony, the WSF/Senate Highways and Transportation Committee tour and the Wenatchee Valley RTPO.

Commissioner Maher reported attending the QUADCO/RTPO regular meeting, the Michael P. Anderson Memorial Dedication, the Ground Breaking for I-90 in Spokane and the Valley Chamber Transportation meeting.

Commissioner Marr reported attending the Michael P. Anderson Memorial Dedication and the Alaskan Way Viaduct Leadership meeting. He reported meeting with Jerry Lenzi and the Downtown Spokane Partnership Committee. He also met with Judy Giniger regarding public transit issues and benchmarking.

Chair Davis presented Resolution No. 653 to the Commission for approval to transfer the certification of all Transportation Commission records and delegation of authority to Jennifer Ziegler, Administrator, with an effective date of September 1, 2003.

It was moved by Commissioner Barnes, and seconded by Commissioner Maher, to approve Resolution No. 653 transferring the certification of all Transportation Commission records to Jennifer Ziegler, Administrator, Transportation Commission effective September 1, 2003. The motion was approved unanimously.

Chair Davis reported attending the WSF/Senate Highways and Transportation Committee tour. He also reported meeting with the Regional Transportation Investment District (RTID) leadership regarding recent correspondence. Chair Davis requested that the Commission meeting dates for November 2003 be changed to November 13 and 14. Commissioner's approved the change.

The Commission meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m., on August 20, 2003.